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ABSTRACT

Burnout affects all professions but tends to be more pervasive in the human service occupations such as education. Symptoms include dissatisfaction, negativism, boredom, unpreparedness, testiness, frequent illness, forgetfulness, depression, and tiredness. The wellness approach can lessen or prevent burnout in a community college setting. Centered upon the idea of individuals taking responsibility for their own health status, the approach encompasses the management of time, people, space and physical well-being. Instructors have the responsibility to determine if their teaching is being affected by burnout through regularly completing self-assessments of personal and professional strengths, limitations, and skill areas and recognizing sources of excessive stress. Once negative conditions are identified, faculty should seek ways to prevent or diminish them by achieving and maintaining a balance among their spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, and physical well-being. Finally, specific suggestions for managing time, space, people, and health include keeping weekly schedules of things to do, organizing classroom space and materials to reflect a stress-free environment, developing a cooperative spirit in personal interactions through the sharing of ideas and decisions, and eating well and exercising regularly. Time management and strategy charts for avoiding burnout are included. Diet and exercise tips for avoiding burnout are appended. (HAA)

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AVOIDING FACULTY BURNOUT THROUGH THE WELLNESS APPROACH

BY

WAYNE EASTMAN, Ed.D.

A PAPER PRESENTED TO THE ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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Dr. Eastman is Department Coordinator of Early Childhood Education and Access Programs at Westviking College of Applied Arts, Technology and Continuing Education, Corner Brook, NF. He received his Doctor of Education from Boston University in 1987. He has published over 20 articles in professional and scholarly journals; as well he has presented papers at provincial, national and international conferences.

PRESENTATION DESCRIPTION

Burnout is prevalent, but with more effective management skills, faculty in a community college setting can protect themselves from being 'used-up'. This presentation will focus on wellness as a multifaceted approach that makes individuals responsible for the status of their own health. Participants will learn practical, personal strategies for avoiding or lessening career burnout.

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Burnout affects all professions but tends to be more pervasive in the human service occupations such as education.

This presentation will focus on how the Wellness Approach can lessen or prevent burnout in a community college setting. Wellness is a multifaceted approach that centres upon individuals taking responsibility for their health status. In the context of faculty burnout, wellness involves the optimal development of the physical self, management of the working environment, and productive relations with other people. These supporting structures personify a positive approach towards preventing career burnout. Under the umbrella of the Wellness Approach, the following broad categories will be considered: managing time, managing space, managing people, and managing physical well being. Each category will be discussed in the context of practical strategies college faculty could employ to avoid or lessen career burnout.

This presentation is premised on the philosophy that in this people intense profession we must be vigilant, ensuring that strategies and techniques are developed so that educators do not become 'used up'. Hence, this workshop will be highly participatory with delegates inputting into the 'charting' of burnout strategies.

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AVOIDING FACULTY BURNOUT THROUGH THE WELLNESS APPROACH

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INTRODUCTION

Burnout affects all professions but tends to be more pervasive in the human service occupations such as education. Burnout systems include: dissatisfaction, negativism, boredom, unpreparedness, testiness, frequent illness, forgetfulness, depression, and tiredness. Burnout is insidious because it not only affects individuals, but can also affect all aspects of a college setting.

This presentation will focus on how the Wellness Approach can lessen or prevent burnout in a community college setting. Wellness is a multifaceted approach that centres upon individuals taking responsibility for their health status. In the context of faculty burnout, wellness involves the optimal development of the physical self, management of the working environment, and productive relations with other people. These supporting structures personify a positive approach towards preventing career burnout. Under the umbrella of the Wellness Approach, the following broad categories

will be considered: managing time, managing space, managing people, and managing physical well being. Each category will be discussed in the context of practical strategies college faculty could employ to avoid or lessen career burnout.

HOW BURNED OUT ARE YOU?-A SELF-DIAGNOSIS INSTRUMENT

You can compute your burnout score by completing the following questionnaire.

How often do you have any of the following experiences? Please use the scale.

1 - Never
2 - Once in a great while
3 - Rarely
4 - Sometimes
5 - Often
6 - Usually
7 - Always

____ 1. Being tired.
____ 2. Feeling depressed
____ 3. Having a good day.
____ 4. Being physically exhausted
____ 5. Being emotionally exhausted
____ 6. Being happy.
____ 7. Being wiped out.
____ 8. Can't take it any more.
____ 9. Being unhappy.
____ 10. Feeling run-down.
____ 11. Feeling trapped.
___ 12. Feeling worthless.
___ 13. Being weary.
___ 14. Being troubled.
___ 15. Feeling disillusioned and resentful.
___ 16. Being weak and susceptible to illness.
___ 17. Feeling hopeless.
___ 18. Feeling rejected.
___ 19. Feeling optimistic
___ 20. Feeling energetic
___ 21. Feeling anxious.

COMPUTATION OF THE SCORE:

Add the values you wrote next to the following items: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21 = _____ (A).

Add the values you wrote next to the following items: 3, 6, 19, 20 = _____ (B).

Subtract (B) from 32 = _____ (C).

Add A and C = _____ (D).

Divide D by 21 = _____ This is your burnout score.

SCORE:

2-3 You are doing well.
3-4 Examine your work and life; evaluate your priorities.
5 You are experiencing burnout and should do something about it.
6 You are in an acute state of burnout and should seek help.

** FROM CAREER BURNOUT BY PINES AND ARSONSON, 1980.

OVERVIEW OF BURNOUT AND WELLNESS

Mark Twain wrote, "We ought to be interested in the future, for that is where we are going to spend the rest of our lives". Avoiding career burnout embraces that philosophy and ensures that individuals embark on a deliberate game plan so that". . . they are active in moulding their environment to meet their need" (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

"Would you tell me, please which way I ought to walk from here? That depends a good deal on where you want to get to, said the cat. I don't much care where, said Alice. Then it doesn't matter which way you walk, said the cat. So long as I get somewhere, Alice added as an explanation. Oh, you're sure to do that, said the cat, if you only walk long enough" (Alice in Wonderland). Like Alice, without deliberate direction, it is easy to slip into unfilling careers which often leads to job burnout (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

Research tends to reflect three general characteristics indicative of the burnout response: emotional and physical exhaustion, disillusionment and self-doubt, and blame. If educators are sensitized to the preceding warning signals, they may then take steps to avoid burnout.

Everyone encounters some emotional and physical exhaustion at some time in their career. But when the exhaustion is continuous the instructor should evaluate its impact on his/her role as a productive educator. Exhaustion can lead to disillusionment which often manifests into cynicism. Disillusionment occurs when the exhilaration of teaching and interacting with students slips away.

The final criteria, self-doubt and blame, is an outcome of exhaustion and disillusionment. Many describe this final dimension of burnout as functioning like a robot: skills and knowledge remain intact but the will to perform becomes mechanical (Jorde-Bloom, 1989). When burnout has completed its course, teachers/instructors become passive rather than active participants in the educational process.

The first step in determining if burnout is affecting your role as an educator is a personal assessment. Take stock of your present situation. A self-assessment does not have to be elaborate. Examine your personal and professional profiles and list strengths, limitations, and skills in each area. By completing this process on a regular basis, you can often eliminate concerns which can facilitate job burnout.

> Perhaps the most important strategy for preventing job burnout is to recognize just what aspects of our professional lives contribute to excessive stress. It is also important to assess what aspects of work give satisfaction and promote feelings of accomplishment. Only in this way will we be able to tailor the position to be stimulating and challenging and one to which we will want to make a long-term commitment (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

Stress is the primary culprit in burnout. When educators assess their personal and professional profiles the need to identify those behaviours which are indicators of stress and replace them with 'physical actions'. For example, if you feel yourself avoiding a student because he or she is exhibiting inappropriate behaviour, don't procrastinate. Rather arrange a meeting with the student to discuss the difficulty and initiate a dialogue with colleagues about the situation. Once the stressors are identified then a strategy can be put in place to eliminate or lessen its effect; and remember, do not let those things you cannot change get in the way of those you can.

When discussing strategies for preventing burnout in a college setting, three broad categories require consideration: managing time, managing space, managing people and managing physical well being.

Wellness means engaging in attitudes and behaviour that enhance quality of life and maximize personal potential. Wellness emphasizes the need to take responsibility for engaging in behaviours that develop optimal health. The ongoing process of wellness requires early decision making in nutrition, stress management, physical fitness, preventive health care, emotional health, other aspects of health (Anspaugh, 1994).

Wellness requires faculty seek ways to prevent or diminish disabling conditions such as job burnout. Faculty choose to develop a sound diet, a sufficient exercise program, and methods of managing stress, that is, managing time, managing people, and managing the environment.

Achieving a high level of wellness requires constant balance and maintenance of the five components of wellness. The components are:

1. **Spiritual** - the belief in some force that unites human beings. This force can include nature, science, religion, or a higher power. It also includes your morals, values and ethics. From the wellness perspective, spiritually is the quest for a higher quality of life.

2. **Social** - the ability to interact successfully with people and the environment. Social health is the ability to develop and maintain intimacy with others and to have respect and tolerance for those with different opinions and beliefs.

3. **Emotional** - the ability to control stress and to express emotions appropriately and comfortably. Emotional health is the ability to recognize and accept feelings and to not be defeated by setbacks and failures.

4. **Intellectual** - the ability to learn and use information effectively for personal, family, and career development. Intellectual wellness means striving for continued growth and learning to deal with new challenges effectively.

5. **Physical** - the ability to carry out daily tasks, develop cardiovascular fitness, maintain adequate nutrition and proper body fat level, and avoid abusing drugs and alcohol or using tobacco products. In general, physical health is an investment in positive lifestyle habits (Anspaugh, 1994).

As stated previously, four key areas of a wellness lifestyle include: exercise, nutrition, stress management, and your relationships. By using the preceding basics of wellness, one can create a 'wellness report card' that shows how you are doing in the major areas of wellness. Included is an example of a 'wellness report card' (Wellaware, 1989).

WELLNESS REPORT CARD

NAME _____

For each wellnesss"subject," grade yourself on your attitudes and behaviors for the past month (or past year). Use the criteria listed on the report card to help you make an overall assessment and give yoruself a grade!

Now, for each wellness "subject," list your accomplishments (what you have done well in this dimension of well-being) and your shortcomings (areas where you will need to improve).

SUBJECT	overall grade	well done	areas for improvement
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY Do you believe that you are the key to your well-being? Have you been taking charge of taking care of yourself? How responsible have you been? What about your health habits (eg, smoking, alcohol, seat belts, attention to symptoms, regular check-ups, medications)?			
EXERCISE Are you satisfied with your general energy level and your fitness status? Have you been exercising, within your body's safe limits, to keep physically fit? Could you work out harder, more often? Is exercise fun--or drudgery?			

NUTRITION How do you feel about your eating habits? Do you eat quality food? Is it healthy for you? Are you eating about the right amount of food? What about your eating style? How do yea eat? What's your mood? Your pace?			
STRESS MANAGEMENT How's your stress level? Too high? Too iow? About right? Do you relax? How? How do you cope? Is the way you typically handle pressure healthful or harmful for you?			
PERSONAL ENVIRONMENT Do the people around you support you with caring? Have you been building and maintaining friendships that are satisfying and stimulating and supportive? Have you tried to modify your home and your workplace so they enhance your well-being?			

> Wellness involves optimal development of the physical self, the conservative use and management of stress energy, effectiveness in communicating and dealing with emotions, positive use of the mind, environmental sensitivity and the development of productive relations with other people. It is characterized by individuals who take the responsibility for striving for optimal functioning by mitigating the negatives and building on the positive of their lives (Rosato, 1990).

Reversing the trend and reducing the causes that fuel the burnout cycle is the shared responsibility of all college personnel. Before faculty come to their personal breaking points, they must be provided with strategies for coping. While this task is by no means easy, it is possible through the wellness approach to educate college faculty as well as to structure work environments that nurture rather than consume (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING TIME, SPACE, PEOPLE, AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

> Perhaps the most important strategy for preventing job burnout is to recognize just what aspect of our professional lives contribute to excessive stress. It is also important to assess what aspects of work give satisfaction and promote feelings of accomplishment. Only in this way will we be able to tailor the position to be stimulating and challenging and one to which we will want to make a long-term commitment (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

MANAGING TIME

As was cited previously, two of the factors included in the ongoing process of wellness is stress management and emotional health. Hence the development of good time management techniques can contribute to enhancing these two wellness criteria.

Faculty can minimize the adverse affects of stress with a time management strategy. Make your own time budget. One such planning technique is to develop two records - one, a list of things to do, and the other, a weekly time schedule. On a grid that lists the days of the week across the top and the hours of the day down the side, fill in your set of obligations such as a staff meeting or your work schedule. Prioritize other obligations on a things-to-do list and try to complete them during the week. Check the completed tasks off and always place any uncompleted tasks on next week's list (Debruyne, 1991). An example of a time management grid is included in this presentation.

"Developing a time log is also a good initial step when developing time management strategies. Select a fairly typical day and begin your time log when you first wake up in the morning and make notations every 30 minutes throughout the day. Be honest with yourself" (Jorde-Bloom,1989). After completing the log, analyse it for particular patterns. An example of a Time Log can be found in this presentation.

TIME MANAGEMENT GRID

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
6:00(am)							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00(pm)							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							

NOTE: Attach a things to do' list.

Time Log

Date _____

Time	Activity	Feelings

SOURCE: Jorde-Bloom (1989)

The formula for time management is different for each person. What works well for one faculty member may not for another. Here are a few suggestions to help faculty generate their own time-saving file of ideas: group and consolidate activities; get a good start - for example, planning the night before; develop routines - planning so that we can do the same things at the same time each day on each week both conserves energy and promotes continuity in our lives; avoid congestion; take advantage of your mood - to the extent possible we should match our daily time target with our energy profile; coordinate personal care needs far in advance; be a wait-watcher - learn to use transition time productively; think about being early; call ahead; and eliminate when possible (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

MANAGING SPACE

An awareness of the principles of environmental psychology is important because faculty often have to be directly involved in spatial considerations of a classroom or lab. Space in a classroom or lab is not neutral. Hence it can have a positive or negative impact on an instructor's behaviour. Thus, the question worthy of consideration is how do instructors create quality settings where educators and students thrive? For example, when the quality of

spatial arrangement is low, noise level is likely to increase and students are more likely to engage in disruptive behaviour.

Instructors need to organize space and materials so that it reflects a stress-free environment. For example, studies indicate that lighting may be a powerful influence on students. A comfortable room temperature can also go a long way in reducing stress. It is recognized that higher room temperatures can cause fatigue and irritability.

MANAGING PEOPLE

A classroom is much more than its physical surroundings and if instructors are to enhance the quality of work environment they need to consider they quality of personnel interactions. They foundation for a successful relationship with colleagues and students is a cooperative spirit developed through the sharing of ideas and decisions. There are many techniques instructor can employ to create and maintain positive "people rapport." Regular staff meetings open the channels of communication and give instructors the opportunity to discuss their concerns.

To feel satisfied and productive in their roles as educators, instructors have three essential needs that must be addressed: the need for affiliation: to be with friends and colleagues who are

caring, supportive, and appreciative; the need for achievement: to feel useful, challenged, and recognized for work well done; and the need for involvement: to be able to make decisions about things which directly affect them (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

MANAGING PHYSICAL WELL BEING

Assuming responsibility for a person's own health requires forethought and effort. With this statement in mind, this segment of the presentation will focus on nutrition, physical fitness, and stress management strategies.

The relationship between nutrition and health is recognized as a factor contributing to the wellness process. McGee-Cooper (1992) puts forth several worthwhile strategies germane to the preceding relationship:

1. Many people fall into they trap of gulping down their coffee and a meagre slice of toast as they get ready for work. This manner of eating is not relaxing and may even provoke enough stress to interfere with digestion.

2. We know generally that too much salt, sugar, fat, cholesterol, and caffeine will lower performance levels. They interfere with the chemistry of your brain and impede optimum performance, and they can plug up your cardiovascular system, causing your heart to pump harder, your body to get less oxygen, and toxins in your blood to be less effectively filtered out.

3. We also know now that salt, sugar, fat, and caffeine are addictive. The more you eat, the more you want. And the more salt you add to your food, the less you taste it, so the more salt you want. These are called soft addictions, but they work in much the same way as the hard addictions of nicotine, alcohol, and narcotics. They have the most control in your life when you are out of balance. So getting your life back into balance can be an important first step toward eliminating these soft addictions from your eating habits.

4. Caffeine stimulates the central nervous system and can produce a variety of affects elsewhere in the body. Depending upon how much you consume, it can increase your heartbeat, speed up your metabolism, and promote secretion of stomach acid. Psychologically, the effect of caffeine ha been described as a "lift". However, you won't feel more pep when you drink your coffee, but instead will feel worse without it. To get the most benefit from your daily coffee, you need to keep your daily limit to two cups or less.

5. Other studies indicate the coffee and tea, even if decaffeinated, act as a diuretic. As such, they flush out significant chemicals form your system that are necessary for your brain to function most effectively. So drinking six to eight glasses of water daily (which increases significant chemicals to the brain) can be as positive for your energy and productive thinking as a heavy coffee habit can be draining and debilitating.

6. Think of the changes in your eating habits as permanent rather than as a temporary diet. When you decide to gently improve your eating habits for life, you begin to make real progress. The secret is to find many ways to have fun other than eating junk food. Exercise daily. (This changes your metabolism so that you think better and process your food in more productive ways.)

7. Another secret is to buy and bring into the house and to work only energy food. For example, make sure that there are always plenty of fresh, 2appetizing fruits and vegetables your house. Instead of an alccholic or soft drink beverage, try a cool glass of sparkling water with a twist of lime in the evening. Whole-grain breads with high fibre round out meals. Steamed vegetables can be an alternative to meat, and fruit for dessert is a nice change. One key is to make sure you enjoy and look forward to your food choices. Fresh raspberries in season and snow peas can become a regular treat. Even artichokes and fresh blueberries cost less than sirloin steak or a gallon of ice-cream--and are much healthier for you. Be sure your meals are balanced, and slowly try some changes to see what fits you best.

8. There are usually four times during the working day most instructors either lose energy or overlook the possibility of putting fresh energy into their day: getting ready for work, commuting to work, eating lunch, and commuting from work. Most people devote from two and one-half hours per day to four hours per day to these activities. Think about how you use these four periods, especially eating lunch. The question germane to eating lunch and losing energy is "Does the food you choose leave you feeling energized or sluggish an hour later?' If the answer is sluggishness then a change is in order. Hence, for lunch you should plan at least twenty minutes of positive energy-building time.

A strategy instructors can employ in the workplace as well as during leisure hours is to exercise regularly. Studies have demonstrated that people who exercise regularly reported more creative energy as well as more energy devoted to their jobs (Rosato, 1990). Physical activity will not only energize you but

will also cause your metabolism to work much more effectively.

In the past decade or so a new medical field entitled psychoneuroimmunology has emerged. This discipline links ones mood, attitudes, thoughts and body chemistry. "It is therefore important to choose to enjoy exercise. If you get up early to run but are reminding yourself all the while that you don't like it, you are blocking the beneficial effects of endorphins with your negative attitude" (McGee-Cooper, 1992).

PRESCRIPTION FOR BURNOUT

> Although the research on the burnout syndrome is diverse in its scope and finding, it is possible to draw a useful composite of the burnout candidate in a college setting. Three general characteristics shape the burnout profile: complete emotional and physical exhaustion, growing disillusionment with the job and life in general, and self-doubt and blame. These characteristics tend to appear gradually and grow in severity over time, depending on the instructor and the circumstances (Jorde-Bloom, 1989).

With the preceding statements in mind, a personalized burnout prevention chart has been included in this presentation (see the following page).

Listed below is McGee-Cooper's (1992) twelve key life-style factors for 'curing' burnout: proper rest; eating for high performance and peak energy; daily nonstressed, fun aerobic

exercise; time alone; time to read and learn; spiritual growth, intimacy and love; fun, joy, and play; new interests and old hobbies; regular and frequent vacations; and sense of purpose.

STRATEGY CHART FOR AVOIDING INSTRUCTOR BURNOUT

Area of Management	Symptoms/ 'Used up Feelings'	Management Strategies	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
Time			Week(s) off:	Month(s) off:	Year off:
Space					
People					
Physical Well-being					

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APPENDICES

GENERAL TIPS FOR PREVENTING THAT "USED-UP" FEELING

1. Blood sugar is low at certain times of the day (mid-morning), thus this is not a time for a stressful situation.

2. In general indoor temperatures of 20°C to 25°C is acceptable for winter; and 23°C to 27 C for summer.

3. Avoid caffeine after 2:00 p.m.

4. To much salt, sugar, fat, cholesterol will lower performance levels. The interface with the chemistry of the brain and impede optimum performance.

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5. Mentally link energy with eating choices.

6. Develop and use time alone techniques.

7. Observe what gives you energy and what drains your energy and then balance by linking.

8. Optimize your energy level and lower your stress level - this affords the body the change to metabolize the steroids caused by stress.

9. Got to have energy-diet and exercise are essential. These two prove stress busters can help combat the impact of stress hormones by making it easier for your

body to repair the damage caused by those steroids.

10. The biggest cause of burn out is a dysfunctional work environment - take a hard look at the work environment.

11. Look at "B" vitamins foods (raw fruits, vegetables, pasta, etc.) - research has found that they can play a role in maintaining good health under stress.

12. Eat breakfast. Skipping meals often leads to rebound fatigue. Every eeds refuelling after 8 to 12 hours.

13. Physical fitness increases your energy level. You can obtain an extra hour of valuable energy for every 45 minutes of physical activity.

14. The need for 7 or 8 hours of sleep - the body repairs itself while you are sleeping.

15. "One of the most important ways we can give to others is to take good care of ourselves."

16. Participant suggestions.

IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE

EXERCISES IS NOT ONLY GOOD FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH BUT ALSO HELPS MENTAL HEALTH. IMPROVEMENT IN BOTH DIMENSIONS CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS COPING WITH STRESS MORE EFFECTIVELY.

EXERCISE PROMOTES:

- PROVIDING HIGHER ENERGY LEVELS
- IMPROVING BODY RESISTANCE TO DISEASE
- IMPROVING CARDIOVASCULAR AND RESPIRATORY FITNESS
- ENHANCING SELF-ESTEEM
- REGULATING SLEEP PATTERNS
- IMPROVING ABILITY TO CONCENTRATE BETTER